THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) and (b) The National Airports Authority has a plan to start construction of a new airport at Tura in Meghalaya in the current yer.

Faulty Telephones in Allahabad U.P.

1584. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 3961 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 30th March, 1993 and to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the residents of Preetam Nagar who comes under sub-exchange of Transport Nagar, Allahabad had lodged complaints regularly for more than a fortnight of October, 1992 for faulty telephone in that area, if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Accounts Officer, Telephone Revenue, Allahabad Division had asked each customer of the said area get it verified from the exchange that the particular telephone was out of order so that the telephone rent should be waived, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has taken any action on the receipt of representation of the residents of that area for waiving of telephone rent, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what are the reasons that the Department of Telephones has not taken any initiative to waive the telephone rent so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes. Sir. There were regular complaints due to frequent dropwire cuttings (thefts) in Preetam Nagar area in the said period. More than 60 telephones remained faulty due to these thefts and FIR was lodged with Dhoomangani thana police station for the same. After getting the police concurrence, the missing drop wires were replaced and the telephones restored.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) There was one case on which rebate has been granted on the basis of report of Assistant Engineer, Transport Nagar.

(d) No such cases of Preetam Nagar area is pending.

Separation of Regulatory and Operational Function of Telecom Commission

1585. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the chairman of the Telecom Commission agreed in round-table discussion for separation of the regulatory and operational functions of the commission;

(b) if so, what is the new independent regulatory structure which the Government have in mind; and

(c) whether any thinking has been done on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) to (c) The high power committee (Nanda Committee) on new Indian Telecom Act has recommended separation of regulatory and operating authority. The recommendtion is under consideration.

Private Electronic Intelligence gathering agencies in India

1586. SHRI G. G. SWELL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether private electronic intelligence gathering agencies are operating in India are offering their services to persons who can pay their price: and